



M E D I A R E L E A S E

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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DHS SEEKING MORE SUMMER FOOD PROGRAM SITES IN URBAN AREAS *SPONSORS NEEDED IN RURAL AREAS*

NASHVILLE, Tenn.--The Tennessee Department of Human Services is working hard to ensure low income children receive healthy, nutritious meals during the summer months. To achieve this goal, DHS is seeking greater participation by adding sponsors and increasing sites in the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). Federally funded through the U.S. Department of Agriculture and administered by DHS, the program is intended to provide nutritious meals to low-income children during the summer months when the school lunch program is inactive.

Each year, the Department contracts with local sponsors who are responsible for providing the free meals and snacks to children in needy areas. Last year, 51 agencies operated almost 1,200 sites across the state at locations such as parks, recreation centers, schools, churches, playgrounds, residential camps and subsidized housing complexes. These sponsors were reimbursed a total of \$6.2 million for serving 3.3 million meals over the course of the summer.

Even though nearly 45,000 children a day were served by these agencies in 2004, the Department would like the program to reach more children this summer. To achieve the goal of serving more needy children, additional sponsoring organizations are needed in the rural areas of Tennessee and additional feeding sites are needed in the state's major urban areas where enough sponsors already exist. Greater participation at existing summer food service program locations is also being encouraged.

Sponsorship of the program is available to the following:

- public and private nonprofit school food authorities
- state, county or municipal governments
- public or private nonprofit colleges and universities participating in the National Youth Sports Program
- residential public or private nonprofit summer camps
- nonprofit organizations

Sponsors must agree to serve meals to all children in attendance, regardless of their race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. For information on sponsoring the SFSP, contact David Farmer or Doug Hutchison, before April 1, 2005, at (615) 313-4749. They can also be reached via e-mail at david.farmer@state.tn.us or doug.hutchison@state.tn.us.

The deadline for sponsors to submit applications is May 2, 2005.

For more information on the Summer Food Service Program and other Human Services Programs, please visit our website: <http://www.state.tn.us/humanserv/childcare.htm#food>.

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